



# Phase II and Phase III Archeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18CE14

Site Name: Conowingo

Prehistoric ☒

Other name(s) Cresthull:18CE1; Marye:Cromleys Mountain, Field

Historic ☐

Brief Description:

Late Archaic - Late Woodland, Contact, base camp, short-term resource procurement; Early19th-20th scatter

Unknown ☐

## Site Location and Environmental Data:

Latitude 39.6571 Longitude -76.1771

Elevation -6 m Site slope 0-5%

Site setting

-Site Setting restricted

-Lat/Long accurate to within 1 sq. mile, user may need to make slight adjustments in mapping to account for sites near state/county lines or streams

Maryland Archeological Research Unit No. 16

SCS soil & sediment code Cp,Ch,Bc

Physiographic province Eastern Piedmont

Terrestrial site ☒

Underwater site ☒

Ethnobotany profile available ☐ Maritime site ☐

### Topography

Floodplain ☒ High terrace ☐  
Hilltop/bluff ☐ Rockshelter/cave ☐  
Interior flat ☐ Hillslope ☐  
Upland flat ☐ Unknown ☐  
Ridgetop ☐ Other ☐  
Terrace ☒  
Low terrace ☐

### Ownership

Private ☒  
Federal ☐  
State of MD ☐  
Regional/county/city ☐  
Unknown ☐

### Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) Susquehanna River

**Saltwater** **Freshwater**  
Ocean ☐ Stream/river ☒  
Estuary/tidal river ☐ Swamp ☐  
Tidewater/marsh ☐ Lake or pond ☐  
Spring ☐

Minimum distance to water is 0 m

## Temporal & Ethnic Contextual Data:

Paleoindian site ☐ Woodland site ☐

Archaic site ☐ MD Adena ☐

Early archaic ☐ Early woodland ☒

Middle archaic ☐ Mid. woodland ☒

Late archaic ☒ Late woodland ☒

Unknown prehistoric context ☐

Contact period site ☒ ca. 1820 - 1860 ☒

ca. 1630 - 1675 ☐ ca. 1860 - 1900 ☒

ca. 1675 - 1720 ☐ ca. 1900 - 1930 ☒

ca. 1720 - 1780 ☐ Post 1930 ☐

ca. 1780 - 1820 ☐

Unknown historic context ☐

Unknown context ☐

### Ethnic Associations (historic only)

Native American ☐ Asian American ☐  
African American ☐ Unknown ☒  
Anglo-American ☐ Other ☐  
Hispanic ☐

Y=Confirmed, P=Possible

## Site Function Contextual Data:

### Prehistoric

Multi-component ☒ Misc. ceremonial ☐  
Village ☒ Rock art ☐  
Hamlet ☐ Shell midden ☐  
Base camp ☒ STU/lithic scatter ☒  
Rockshelter/cave ☐ Quarry/extraction ☐  
Earthen mound ☐ Fish weir ☐  
Cairn ☐ Production area ☐  
Burial area ☐ Unknown ☐  
Other context ☐

### Historic

Urban/Rural? Rural ☒

### Domestic

Homestead ☒  
Farmstead ☐  
Mansion ☐  
Plantation ☐  
Row/townhome ☐  
Cellar ☐  
Privy ☐

### Industrial

Mining-related ☐  
Quarry-related ☐  
Mill ☐  
Black/metalsmith ☐

Furnace/forge ☐  
Other ☐

### Transportation

Canal-related ☐  
Road/railroad ☐  
Wharf/landing ☐  
Maritime-related ☐  
Bridge ☐  
Ford ☐

### Educational

### Commercial

Trading post ☐  
Store ☐  
Tavern/inn ☐

### Military

Battlefield ☐

Fortification ☐

Encampment ☐

### Townsite

### Religious

Church/mtg house ☐  
Ch support bldg ☐

### Burial area

Cemetery ☐  
Sepulchre ☐  
Isolated burial ☐

### Bldg or foundation

Possible Structure ☐

Post-in-ground ☐

Frame-built ☐

Masonry ☐

Other structure ☐

### Slave related

### Non-domestic agri

Recreational ☐

Midden/dump ☐

Artifact scatter ☒

Spring or well ☐

Unknown ☐

Other context ☐

## Interpretive Sampling Data:

### Prehistoric context samples

Soil samples taken ☒

Flotation samples taken ☒

Other samples taken ☐

### Historic context samples

Soil samples taken ☒

Flotation samples taken ☒

Other samples taken ☐



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## Diagnostic Artifact Data:

Projectile Point Types	
Koens-Crispin	1
Clovis	
Hardaway-Dalton	
Palmer	
Kirk (notch)	
Kirk (stem)	
Le Croy	
Morrow Mntn	
Guilford	
Brewerton	1
Otter Creek	
Perkiomen	
Susquehanna	5
Vernon	
Piscataway	
Calvert	5
Selby Bay	
Jacks Rf (notch)	
Jacks Rf (pent)	
Madison/Potomac	1
Levanna	1

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

## Prehistoric Sherd Types

Marcey Creek	4	Popes Creek		Shepard		Keyser	
Dames Qtr		Coulbourn		Townsend	26	Yeocomico	
Selden Island		Watson		Minguannan	324	Monongahela	
Accokeek		Mockley	42	Sullivan Cove		Susquehannock	13
Wolfe Neck	73	Clemson Island		Shenks Ferry			
Vinette	1	Page		Moyaone			
				Potomac Cr			

## Historic Sherd Types

Earthenware	
Astbury	
Borderware	
Buckley	
Creamware	
Ironstone	
Jackfield	
Mn Mottled	
North Devon	
Pearlware	
Staffordshire	
Tin Glazed	
Whiteware	
Porcelain	
Stoneware	
English Brown	
Eng Dry-bodie	
Nottingham	
Rhenish	
Wt Salt-glazed	

## Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts	
Other fired clay	2
Flaked stone	12308
Ground stone	207
Stone bowls	360
Fire-cracked rock	2216
Other lithics (all)	59
Ceramics (all)	3320
Rimsherds	8
Human remain(s)	
Modified faunal	
Unmod faunal	
Oyster shell	
Floral material	
Uncommon Obj.	2
Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> beads	

## Prehistoric Features

Mound(s)		Storage/trash pit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Midden		Burial(s)	
Shell midden		Ossuary	
Postholes/molds		Unknown	
House pattern(s)		Other	
Palisade(s)			
Hearth(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Lithic reduc area			

## Lithic Material

Fer quartzite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sil sandstone	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jasper	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Chalcedony	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chert	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ironstone	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rhyolite	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Argilite	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quartz	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Steatite	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Quartzite	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sandstone	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		gneiss	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

☐ Dated features present at site

Historic Artifacts	
Tobacco related	
Pottery (all)	1359
Glass (all)	503
Architectural	590
Furniture	
Arms	
Clothing	
Personal items	
Activity item(s)	
Human remain(s)	
Faunal material	
Misc. kitchen	
Floral material	
Misc.	864
Other <input type="checkbox"/>	

## Historic Features

Privy/outhouse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Depression/mound	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Const feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	Well/cistern	<input type="checkbox"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foundation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trash pit/dump	<input type="checkbox"/>	Railroad bed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cellar hole/cellar	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sheet midden	<input type="checkbox"/>	Earthworks	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hearth/chimney	<input type="checkbox"/>	Planting feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mill raceway	<input type="checkbox"/>
Postholes/molds	<input type="checkbox"/>	Road/walkway	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wheel pit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Paling ditch/fence	<input type="checkbox"/>				

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

## Radiocarbon Data:

Sample 1:		+/-		years BP	Reliability	Sample 2:		+/-		years BP	Reliability	Sample 3:		+/-		years BP	Reliability
Sample 4:		+/-		years BP	Reliability	Sample 5:		+/-		years BP	Reliability	Sample 6:		+/-		years BP	Reliability
Sample 7:		+/-		years BP	Reliability	Sample 8:		+/-		years BP	Reliability	Sample 9:		+/-		years BP	Reliability

☐ Additional radiocarbon results available



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Unknown ☐

## External Samples/Data:

Collection curated at JPPM, Natural History Society of Maryland, Maryland

☐ Additional raw data may be available online

## Summary Description:

Conowingo (18CE14) is a multicomponent site with occupation dating from the Late Archaic through the Late Woodland period. A settlement model for the Conowingo site was suggested to be the seasonal (spring through summer) aggregation of micro-social units into a macro-social unit base camp. A concentration of historic artifacts was also identified at the site. The site is situated on a terrace south of the Conowingo Dam and north of a tributary creek. By at least 1926, artifacts had been reported from the area. As of the last site visit in the early 1980's, the site encompassed about 1150 m of land parallel to the shoreline, by a distance of about 300 m inland. Soils at the site are primarily Comus silt loams, 0-3% slope, formed from occasional flooding.

Construction of the Conowingo Dam and Reservoir in 1926 had major effects on the site. Periodic opening of the floodgates causes severe, rapid erosion to the river banks and effectively cut off access to the northern portion of the site. Two transmission towers were built across the middle of the site sometime prior to 1953. The towers were built on rock foundations constructed at the river terrace edge. A portion of the site between the dam and the transmission towers has been eroded to bedrock as a result of a flood in 1936. In addition, a large area between the dam and the towers served as a staging area during the construction of the dam, thus causing disturbance to the site to about 0.40 km (0.25 miles) south of the dam. The accessible remnant of the site is located between the mouth of a local creek and the towers, however, in this area the river bank is highly susceptible to erosion. Throughout the 20th century, countless people have collected artifacts from the site, especially after major floods. Digging for relics has further damaged the site by hastening stream bank erosion caused by weakening portions of the river bank. Although the site has been extensively disturbed, excavation showed that substantial areas of the southern portion of the site were still intact.

Site 18CE14 was initially identified in 1905 by Talbot D. Jones, an insurance underwriter who was also an active avocational archeologist. Jones graduated from Johns Hopkins University (JHU) in 1899 and died in 1926. His collection and field notes were donated to JHU and in 1980 were being analyzed by the Division of Archeology, Maryland Geological Survey (MGS). The Jones collection, which includes 57 artifacts from this site, is curated by the MAC Lab at the Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum, although it is currently still owned by JHU. In 1916, an avocational archeologist examined the site and collected artifacts during his survey but nothing is known of his methods or collection.

Then in the 1930's another avocational archeologist with the Southeastern Chapter of the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology (SPA) investigated the site, collected artifacts, and reported on it after the 1936 floods. During the flood, most of the gates of the dam were opened for 3 days. Nearly the entire northern half of the site was washed away as the flood waters rose to 2.438 m to 3.048 m (8'-10') above the flood plain. Permission to conduct excavations at the site was granted by the owners of the land in December of 1941. Results of those investigations indicated that the artifacts were deriving primarily from an upper stratum of sandy silt. Artifactual material appeared to have washed out of this layer and come to rest on the lower stratum which forms a beach. A small island located just off the shoreline was also apparently considered to be part of the site. The artifact collection from the island directly reflected that material recovered from the mainland. The excavator described the presence of a Late Woodland village occupation in the northern half of the site, which was damaged by dam construction and totally destroyed in the 1936 flood. This was the only portion of the site where traces of hearths and refuse pits were found. Charcoal, ceramic sherds and animal bones were observed in small pockets near the surface. Animal bones were found nowhere else on the site but in this northern area. Unfortunately, after only limited investigations could be undertaken, work was halted because of the war.

The artifact collection detailed in the 1943 report of the investigations by the SPA included material that had been recovered over an 8 year period, since the 1930's. An estimated 3,449 items were retrieved; no exact totals were provided in the original report therefore these should all be considered minimum estimates. About 20 pieces of debitage, and 1000 points, knives, and scrapers made up the chipped stone items. Projectile points were primarily stemmed but several triangular specimens were also noted. The most common materials utilized were quartz, chert, rhyolite, and argillite. Other lithic items (n=35) included 20 hammerstones, 5 stone picks, and 10 grinding stones. Groundstone items (n=192) included 8 whole and 10 broken grooved axes, 10 other celts, 10 pestles, 1 steatite pipe bowl fragment, a sandstone pipe bowl fragment, 5 steatite cooking pot fragments, 5 gorgets, 5 slate pendants, 1 steatite pendant with an engraved design, 1 green schist pendant with a carved human face, 10 steatite and slate disk beads, 5 notched net weights, 100 broken bannerstones, 10 whole bannerstones, and 10 unfinished bannerstones. There was evidence to suggest that broken bannerstones were often repaired and reused. Most of the axes were ¾ grooved but at least 1 was double grooved. Other fired clay objects were 2 fragments of terra cotta pipes (1 decorated bowl and 1 stem). There were approximately 2,200 ceramic sherds in the collection, at least 8 of which were rim sherds. The majority of the sherds had cord-marked decoration although a number of net-impressed types were also identified. About 200 of those sherds were recovered from the northern portion of the site closest to the dam and many had recognizable quartz temper and cord-marked decoration.

Since the 1940's, supervised testing at the site was limited to occasional visits by members of the Harford County Chapter of the ASM, and a weekend excavation in 1962 by a Pennsylvania state archeologist and members of the Archeological Society of Maryland (ASM) who excavated 2 units measuring 1.524 m<sup>2</sup> (5'x5') at the site. No information specific to those excavations was available in the Maryland Historical Trust library.

When archeologists from the Division of Archeology, Maryland Geological Survey (MGS) and the ASM visited the site in January 1970, they learned that a collector had been surface collecting and digging at the site since 1969. The collector later reported (roughly around June) that dozens of collectors had visited the site following the spring floods of 1970. At that time, the ASM referred to the site with the designation CE1. In 1972, MGS personnel reported several holes dug by pothunters obscured by the aftermath of Hurricane Agnes.

MGS personnel revisited the site in late 1974. They observed that pothunting was focused in southern part of the site where there were sandier soils. ASM members and volunteers were digging several meters away in the northern area of the site where the soils contained more clay. Excavations consisted of digging two 1.524 m<sup>2</sup> (5'x5') test units. The units were located adjacent to units excavated 1962. The soil stratigraphy showed a 12.7 cm (5") deep alluvium deposit from the storm Agnes, above a ca. 50.8 cm (20") mottled sandy clay. This was in turn underlain by a dark zone of old topsoil ca. 12.7 cm deep which sat above a deep sandy clay (presumably subsoil). In one of the test units, Feature 1 was identified as a possible hearth. A concentration of fire-cracked rock and a few flecks of charcoal were noted in the fill. Grit-tempered ceramic sherds were found on the surface of the feature. About 60 ceramic sherds and several points (10, a minimum estimate) were reportedly collected from the site.

In two seasons during 1981 and 1982, archeologists from the MGS and volunteers from the ASM conducted field investigations at site 18CE14. The main goal of the archeological investigations was to collect data on depth, stratigraphy, and cultural periods from the southern end of the Conowingo site before natural and cultural stresses destroyed the remaining vestiges of the site in this area. Also at that time, several of the private collections were examined.



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Artifacts recorded during the examination of those collections included 59 bifaces (points and possible drills or scrapers), 15 groundstone objects (a ¾-grooved axe, 12 bannerstone fragments, 1 stone ring, and 1 paint cup), and 21 unidentified ceramic sherds.

During the 1981 field session 18 units measuring 1 m<sup>2</sup> were excavated along a north-south baseline parallel to the riverbank. The plowzone was shoveled and screened through ¼" mesh, and the layers below the plowzone were excavated in arbitrary 10 cm levels. Soil samples were taken from each level for flotation and the units were excavated to approximately 1 m below the ground surface. During the 1982 field session, 13 individual 2 m<sup>2</sup> units were expanded from the non-contiguous 1 m<sup>2</sup> units excavated in 1981 to form 3 clusters of contiguous units. An additional unit measuring 1 m x 2 m was also excavated. The plowzone was not screened in 1982, and the layers below the plowzone were excavated in 10 cm levels. Soil samples were taken from each level for flotation. The work was concentrated in the southern portion of the site, since that was the principal area of bank erosion and digging by relic hunters.

Three loci, the northern, middle, and southern, were identified along the baseline in 1981 and were examined further in 1982. Excavations revealed that the southern area, near the mouth of the creek, was used most intensively. Late Archaic material was concentrated in the southern and middle areas, while ceramics were concentrated in the northern units. The south area was determined to be a locus of general stone tool manufacture, food processing and habitation whereas the middle area had limited stone tool manufacture with greater emphasis on tool use. The northern area appeared as a general use area highlighted by a concentration of ceramics and retouched and utilized flakes. That some stratigraphic integrity remained in the study area was evidenced by the location of soapstone fragments and Late Archaic points below the plowzone and underlying the Woodland sequence of ceramics and associated points. The Late and Middle Woodland diagnostics shared the 0-10 cm and 10-20 cm levels. The 20-30 cm level was Middle Woodland and the 30-40 cm level contained Early Woodland and Late Archaic diagnostics. The remaining levels (40-80 cm) were Late Archaic.

A total of 14,910 prehistoric artifacts were recovered during the 1981-82 investigations. In all, 10,747 pieces of debitage (824 jasper, 96 chert, 953 rhyolite, 51 meta-andesite, 6,996 quartz, 252 quartzite, 14 argillite, 795 sandstone, 709 gneiss, 57 slate), 17 cores, 66 flaked chunks, 86 utilized unmodified flakes, 39 retouched utilized flakes, 131 bifaces, and 18 "other" unidentified tools were recovered. There were 115 projectile points and point fragments: 1 jasper Madison, 1 quartz Levanna point, 5 quartz Calvert points, 1 quartz Rossville, 1 rhyolite and 1 chert Selby Bay/Fox Creek, 5 rhyolite Susquehanna Broadspers, 1 black jasper Poplar Island, 1 rhyolite Leigh/Koens-Krispin, 33 Bare Island (3 quartzite, 9 gneiss, 2 rhyolite, 1 sandstone, 18 quartz), 4 Savanna River (2 quartzite, 1 quartz, 1 rhyolite), 1 quartz Brewerton side-notched, and 60 unidentified points. Jasper and rhyolite represent non-locally available material types. Other lithic items included 24 hammerstones. A total of 2,216 fire-cracked rock fragments were retained. The 360 soapstone fragments were recorded as Stone Bowls in the table above. A soapstone outcrop is known to exist up the creek and the fragments recovered from the site were thought to be detritus from the finishing of soapstone bowls.

A total of 1,089 ceramic sherds were retained: 26 Townsend, 324 Minguannan (smoothed over cord and corded), 13 Susquehanna Net-impressed, 42 Mockley, 4 Marcey Creek Plain, 1 Vinette I (cord-marked), 73 Wolf Neck (net-impressed and plain), and 606 unidentified sherds. A summary of the 1981 session indicated that 16 Potomac Creek sherds were included in the ceramic assemblage. However, they were omitted from the final report on the 1981-82 seasons, possibly because they were either re-identified as another type in the final analysis (probably as Minguannan) or they were mistakenly overlooked. In addition to the lithics and ceramics, 2 trade beads (1 black seed bead and 1 wire-round transparent light green glass bead) were also recorded with the prehistoric assemblage from the site. They were thought to probably date to the 17th, 18th, or 19th century. These were recorded as Uncommon Objects in the table above and were placed with the prehistoric materials in keeping with the excavator's designation.

A total of 3,316 historic items were also retained during the archeological investigations. They were not discussed in any great detail and were presented using only the most general artifact type descriptions. Architectural items consisted of 590 nails. Kitchen-related items included 1,359 ceramic sherds and 503 glass fragments (although some of these could presumably be window glass shards). Miscellaneous items (n=864) included 295 unidentified iron fragments, 380 pieces of coal, and 189 "other" unidentified objects. The historic artifacts were concentrated in the southernmost section of the study area. In historic times, the terrace formation was the scene of farming, milling, fishing, transportation, and electrical power generation. Between the river and US Route 222 in the immediate vicinity of the site the remains of the Maryland Canal (also called Susquehanna Canal) are to be found. The canal was incorporated by an act of Legislature in 1783 and operated from ca. 1808 to the 1860's. The construction of the Columbia and Port Deposit Railroad, which parallels the east side of Route 222, was carried out from 1866-1877. The completion of the dam and the effects of the Great Depression brought a down swing to the economy of the area. The historic component of the site was less than briefly treated in the site report; presumably it was considered to be insignificant.

Conowingo (18CE14) is a multicomponent site with occupation dating from the Late Archaic through the Late Woodland periods. A settlement model for the Conowingo site was suggested to be the seasonal (spring through summer) aggregation of micro-social units into a macro-social unit base camp. The presence of non-local items at the site suggested a series of exploitive procurement camps operating from the seasonal macro-social unit base camp. It was hypothesized that these micro-social units would move laterally both up and down the Susquehanna River and into the interior river drainages of the nearby creek and other tributary streams and drainages. For decades, the Conowingo Site has been a favorite spot for local relic hunters, has been damaged by construction activities, and undergoes constant erosion from natural processes. Some controlled archeological investigations have been conducted at the site which provided substantial data regarding the site's chronological development and functionality. Unfortunately, it is likely that a great deal of the site excavated in the 1980's has been further eroded. Very little if any of the site remains intact and further archeological investigations would not be likely to yield additional information. Artifact collections from the site can be found at the Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum, the Natural History Society of Maryland, the Maryland Historical Society, and the Harford County Chapter of ASM.

## External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

00005717, 00005731, 00006841, 00006934, Site Files